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CARDIN BILL REQUIRING FEDS TO PAY THEIR FAIR SHARE TO CLEAN UP LOCAL STORMWATER POLLUTION HEADS TO PRESIDENT OBAMA FOR SIGNATURE

Washington, DC – **U.S. Senator Benjamin L. Cardin (D-MD)**, Chairman of the Senate Environment and Public Works (EPW) Water and Wildlife Subcommittee, and **Senator James Inhofe (R-OK)**, Ranking Member of the EPW Committee, lauded Congressional passage of S. 3481, which requires the federal government to comply with local stormwater fees that are used to treat and manage polluted stormwater runoff. Senator Cardin's bill, cosponsored by Senator Inhofe, as well as **Senators Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell (Both D-WA)**, and **George Voinovich (R-OH)**, amends the *Clean Water Act*, in response to recent written decisions that rebuffed or left ambiguous the need for Federal agencies to pay such fees.

"At stake has been a fundamental issue of equity: polluters should be financially responsible for the pollution that they cause, including the federal government," **said Senator Cardin**. "From Washington, DC, to Washington State, the failure of the federal government to pay localities for reasonable costs associated with the control and abatement of pollution that originated on its properties has taken its toll. Annually hundreds of thousands of pounds of pollutants wash off the hardened surfaces in urban areas and into local rivers and streams, threatening the health of our citizens and causing significant environmental degradation. I thank my Senate colleagues and the House of Representatives for working together to remove all ambiguity about the responsibility of the federal government to pay these normal and customary stormwater fees."

Senator Inhofe: "I was pleased to work with Senators Cardin, Voinovich, Murray, and Cantwell to pass bipartisan legislation to help local governments pay for costly unfunded federal mandates. This bill is yet another example of how we can reach across the aisle to pass common-sense legislation. It makes perfect sense that, as with other utilities, federal agencies pay their fair share of stormwater management fees. Right now, some federal agencies are not paying these fees, imposing costly burdens on the communities in which the agency operates. Thanks especially to Senator Cardin's leadership, this bill enjoys the support of numerous state and local government associations, as well as my own state of Oklahoma."

Among the communities in billing disputes with federal agencies are the Bureau of Prisons in Lexington-Fayette County in Kentucky, which owes \$3,369 in stormwater fees. The City of Aurora, CO has billed the Buckley Air Force base for \$143,445 in outstanding stormwater fees as of May 2010. The City of Tampa Bay is owed \$21,000 for stormwater services provided to federal facilities owned by Naval Reserve Center, HUD, Veterans Affairs, US Post office and other federal buildings. Seattle has an outstanding stormwater fee bill of \$1.9 million from 2006-2010 for the following departments: NOAA, VA, ACOE, and the Navy. In Eugene, OR, the

Bonneville Power Authority owes \$2,500 currently. Gwinnet County, Atlanta is owed \$160,000. The largest amount owed is for stormwater charges in Washington, D.C. where the outstanding balance is \$2.4 million.

The legislation had the backing of the National Governors Association, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the Council of State Governments, National Association of Counties, National League of Cities, The U.S. Conference of Mayors, and the International City/County Management Association.

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